

based reading instruction to the youngest of the young? One way is to make sure that Head Start has a reading component as a part of its overall mission.

So I want to thank you all for coming. This is a week where I'm going to, hopefully, focus the Nation's attention on public schools and how the Congress and the executive branch can work together to pass law and appropriate money that will enable Dr. Paige and myself to work on the noblest of all missions, that every single child be educated in America, and not one—I mean not one—be left behind.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:49 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Education Roderick R. Paige; G. Reid Lyon, chief, Child Development Branch, National Institute for Child Health and Human Development; and Phyllis Hunter, consultant, Texas Reading Initiative.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Democratic Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters *January 22, 2001*

Legislative Agenda on Education

The President. Thank you all for coming this afternoon. I've had the honor of hosting a group of distinguished folks who have had experience with Government here, that happen to be of the Democrat persuasion. We had a discussion about—an advisory session about what to think about in Washington, about how to move issues such as education. We've spent a lot of time talking about education and how to get an education agenda moving forward in this important town.

I can't thank the former Senators and a man who has seen enough klieg lights in his day to know what they're all about, and of course, the Ambassador and Bill Gray, the distinguished chairman of the United Negro College Fund for being here. For me, it's been a very helpful discussion.

Ambassador Strauss said something that's really important and is so true. He reminded me that Democrats are just as patriotic about their country as Republicans, that there is good in everybody. And that's what I'm going to look for. This administration is going to

seek the good in everybody and find that ability to come together for the good of the country, as well.

So I want to thank these distinguished citizens of the country for being here, people who brought class and distinction when they held power and set a good legacy for those of us who follow.

Thank you.

Mr. Ambassador, do you want to say something?

Former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union Robert Strauss. I want to say, all of us are delighted to be here, and all of us are pleased that the President extended this invitation. I think that the group not only is appreciative, but they've tried to be responsible to the discussion.

Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, how do you square your decision—how do you square your decision, Mr. President to—

The President. I'm not sure. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:25 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to William Gray III, president, United Negro College Fund. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement to Participants in the March for Life

January 22, 2001

Good afternoon, friends and fellow citizens. Two days ago, Americans gathered on the Washington Mall to celebrate our Nation's ideals. Today, you are gathered to remind our country that one of those ideals is the infinite value of every life.

I deeply appreciate your message and your work. You see the weak and defenseless, and you try to help them. You see the hardship of many young mothers and their unborn children, and you care for them both. In so many ways, you make our society more compassionate and welcoming.

We share a great goal: to work toward a day when every child is welcomed in life and protected in law. We know this will not come easily, or all at once. But the goal leads us onward: to build a culture of life, affirming